

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. An interactive educational toy apparatus comprising:
2 (a) an indicium containing structure including an indicium and a first
3 attachment element;
4 (b) a base unit capable of being attached to a vertical surface, wherein the
5 base unit includes
6 (i) a housing,
7 (ii) a receiving region adapted to receive the indicium containing
8 structure,
9 (iii) a processor unit in the housing,
10 (iv) a speaker coupled to the processor unit,
11 (v) a reader coupled to the processor unit, and
12 (vi) a second attachment element coupled to the housing,
13 wherein the indicium containing structure is capable of being attached to the
14 base unit using the first attachment element and the base unit is capable of being attached to
15 the vertical surface using the second attachment element.

1 2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first attachment element
2 comprises a first magnet, and wherein the second attachment element comprises a second
3 magnet.

1 3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the indicium is three-dimensional.

1 4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the indicium is a letter, a number, a
2 symbol, or a portion of an animal.

1 5. The apparatus of claim 4 further comprising a plurality of the indicium
2 containing structures, wherein the plurality of indicium containing structure represent the
3 alphabet.

1 6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the indicium containing structure
2 comprises a part of an animal.

1 7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the base unit includes a window that
2 is cooperatively structured to receive a back structure of the indicium containing structure.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the back structure includes a
2 structural code.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the base unit includes a depressible
2 switch in a receiving region that receives the indicium containing structure, and wherein the
3 depressible switch is upwardly biased in the absence of pressure on the indicium containing
4 structure when the indicium containing structure is attached to the base unit.

1 10. A method of using an interactive educational toy apparatus
2 comprising:

3 (a) attaching the base unit on a vertical surface, wherein the base unit
4 includes

5 (i) a housing,

6 (ii) a processor unit in the housing,

7 (iii) a speaker coupled to the processor unit, and

8 (iv) a reader coupled to the processor unit; and

9 (b) attaching the indicium containing structure including an indicium to
10 the base unit so that the indicium containing structure is attached to the base unit and the
11 vertical surface.

1 11. The method of claim 10 further comprising pressing the indicium
2 containing structure after (b) to cause the base unit to produce a sound associated with the
3 indicium.

1 12. The method of claim 10 wherein the vertical surface is a refrigerator
2 door and wherein the base unit further comprises a magnet.

1 13. The method of claim 10 wherein the base unit further comprises a
2 memory unit coupled to the processor unit, wherein the memory unit comprises code for
3 audio associated with the indicium.

1 14. The method of claim 10 wherein the base unit further comprises a
2 window, and wherein the window is sized to receive two or more indicium containing
3 structures.

1 15. The method of claim 10 wherein the base unit further comprises a
2 window that receives the indicium containing structure.

1 16. The method of claim 10 wherein the base unit further comprises a
2 memory unit, wherein the memory unit comprises code for informing a user whether or not
3 the correct or incorrect combination of indicium containing structures is on the base unit.

1 17. An interactive educational toy apparatus comprising:

2 (a) an indicium containing structure including a three-dimensional
3 indicium and a first magnet;

4 (b) a base unit capable of being attached to a vertical surface, wherein the
5 base unit includes

6 (i) a housing,

7 (ii) a processor unit in the housing,

8 (iii) a memory unit coupled to the processor unit, wherein the
9 memory unit comprises code for audio associated with the indicium,

10 (iv) a speaker coupled to the processor unit,

11 (v) a reader coupled to the processor unit, and

12 (vi) a second magnet and adapted to attract the vertical surface so
13 that the base unit is attached to the surface.

1 18. The interactive educational toy apparatus of claim 17 wherein the
2 indicium is one of a sequence of ordered indicia, and wherein the apparatus further comprises
3 a set of indicium containing structures respectively including the ordered sequence of indicia.

1 19. The interactive educational toy of claim 18 wherein the sequence of
2 ordered indicia is the alphabet or an ordered set of numbers.

1 20. The interactive educational toy of claim 18 wherein the audio
2 associated with the indicium comprises audio for the name of the indicium and one or more
3 phonetic pronunciations associated with the indicium.